

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125



Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

007100076A

Boston N.

774, 775

Town Lexington

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 282 Bedford St.

Historic Name Nathan Reed House

Uses: Present Multi-Family Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction before 1798

Source Direct Tax of 1798

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard/Brick/Wood Flushboard

Roof Asphalt Single

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures Attached Barn

Major Alterations (with dates)

Rear additions (dates unknown)



Condition Excellent

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 1.1 A.

Setting Set back from a street with constant traffic

Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (month / year) April 1998

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

282 Bedford St. (MHC #774) is one of the few brick-ended Federals in Lexington; in addition to being well-preserved, it is earlier and higher-style than most others. The house is rectangular, 2½ stories, five-by-four bays, and side-gabled with two tall front and two tall rear end chimneys. It is set on a granite foundation and roofed with asphalt shingles; the front and rear elevations are clad with wood clapboards, the ends with brick, and the gables with wood flushboards. At the rear of the original house is a 2½-story, one-by-five bay, front-gabled addition with one ridge and one side end chimney; a small one-story bay is located in the reentrant angle. At the rear of the first addition is another front-gabled addition, this one one-by-two bays, on a fieldstone foundation, three stories because it is on a slope, and with a one-story shed-roofed addition on its south elevation. To it is attached a 1½-story, one-by-one bay side-gabled barn (MHC #775) with the original door replaced by a smaller one. The center entrance in the main block has a frontispiece flanked by pilasters with an entablature that includes a molded cornice and a frieze board decorated with curved brackets that have guttae at their bases and an applied diamond pattern underneath. Within the frontispiece, a molded door surround has another set of pilasters and a projecting keyblock over a semi-circular fanlight with leaded tracery. Secondary entries are located on the south gable end of the main block and on both the south and north elevations of the first addition; the latter have projecting molded cornices. Windows in the original house are 12/12 and 2/2 double hung sash, 6/6 elsewhere. In addition to its elaborate frontispiece, Federal details on the main block include wide pilastered cornerboards and pedimented gables.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☐ see continuation sheet

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house was built by Nathan Reed (1743–1811), certainly before 1798, when it is listed in the Direct Tax of that year, and possibly as early as the 1780s, based on the style of its doorway. The current assessors' date of 1786 may, for once, be correct. Tradition has it that the furthest rear addition was built by Nathan's father, William Reed (1693–1778), and the connecting addition in 1880–1890. Nathan Reed participated in the skirmish on April 19, 1775, was a selectman from 1785–1788, and a church deacon from 1787–1808. After his death his property was divided in 1817 by his two surviving sons, Nathan (1776–1836) and Christopher (1792–1861), Christopher getting this house and land on this (the west) side of Bedford St. and Nathan getting other land, much of it on the east side of Bedford St. Nevertheless, Nathan seems to have lived in this house while Christopher built other houses on Bedford St. (330 Bedford St., MHC #778 and 342 Bedford St., MHC #779). When Nathan died, this house and the 40 acres associated with it went to his oldest son Cyrus (1798–1873), who apparently lived here until he sold the house and farm in 1872 to George T. Smith. It may have been the Smiths who added the connecting addition; they called the property Orchard Hill Farm and took in boarders. The Smith family owned the property well into the 20th century; they raised apples and, according to a later account, this part of Bedford St. was lined with orchards.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ see continuation sheet

Banios, Mona, to Nancy Butters, 11 August 1992, 12 October 1992. In possession of Nancy Butters, Lexington, MA.
Direct Tax of 1798. Microfilm. Cary Library, Lexington, MA.

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society.
Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913. 2: 559, 562–63, 565.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Deeds. Cambridge, MA. 232: 13; 241: 116; 359: 321; 1223: 330.

☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
Lexington

Property Address
282 Bedford St.

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Area(s) Form No.

774



Roll #1, Negative #24A